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CENTER FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH

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Certification of State Register Listing

The Register of Historic Kansas Places includes all Kansas properties nominated to the National Register as well as lower threshold properties which are listed on the state register only.

Property Name: Steinbuchel House

Address: 1905 Park Place, Wichita, Kansas 67203

County: Sedgwick

Owner: David and Nancy Cullen

Address: 1905 Park Place, Wichita, Kansas 67203

National Register eligible _____

State Register eligible x

This property was approved by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review for the Register of Historic Kansas Places on November 7, 1992.

I hereby certify that this property is listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

Ramon Powers
State Historic Preservation Officer

Date Nov. 11, 1992

The Taylor-Steinbuchel-Gouldner House (c. 1887) is being nominated to the Register of Historic Kansas Places under criteria A, B, and C for its historical association with the growth and development of Wichita, its historical association with the Stackman-Steinbuchel family, and its architectural significance as a Queen Anne-Romanesque residence.

According to City Preservation Records, which cite the *Wichita Eagle*, 3 June 1887 and 26 September 1976, the residence was (probably) designed in the summer of 1887 by the local architectural firm Terry and Hayward. Terry and Hayward formed their partnership in the late spring of 1887. However, in an effort to confirm the 3 June 1887 account and acquire additional construction information, a search of newspaper accounts of 3 June and that entire month indicate the citation of that date is an error. Whoever originally found the notation claims Terry and Hayward had completed plans of a new \$10,000, brick, ten-room residence for L.M. Clapp (who did not own this land at the time, never resided there, and who erected a frame house a block west of this area). The secondary documentation listed the new "Clapp" residence as to be located near the corner of Eighteenth Street and Park Place Avenue (the latter street was originally named Main and was not renamed until 1908). This discrepancy indicates the researcher interpreted the newspaper article from which the information came and may have mistaken other details). The 26 September 1976 *Wichita Eagle* article states the house was built in 1887 for Lee Taylor of Taylor and Hall Insurance Company. This second record appears the more likely and is supported by land records and written documentation of the time.

Certainly the house was one of the few nineteenth-century, brick residences constructed in Wichita. The *Wichita Journal of Commerce* (November 1887), contains a pen and ink drawing of the residence on page 101. The journal, which served as a local business promotional publication of the city, included drawings of various mansions, commercial and institutional buildings that existed or that were under construction throughout the city. Beneath the drawing of the Taylor House is the statement that the residence was the home of Lee Taylor and was located at the corner of Eighteenth and Main streets. The drawing depicts half-timbering in the front gable and a street-level yard. The artist may have made the drawing from the architectural plans that were later changed, taken artistic license with the drawings, or made reference to a pattern house. In actuality, the half-timbering was not added and the grounds were terraced (see period photograph).

During the 1880s, Wichita's population increased from 5,482 in 1880 to 48,000 in 1889 when the economic bubble burst in western land speculation. In 1887, the population of Wichita was 31,760 and numerous Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque residences were under construction. With the exception of the extant limestone constructed cottages designed by architects Proudfoot and Bird, few masonry dwellings of this era still exist. The Taylor-Steinbuchel-Gouldner residence is one of the few extant brick models of the boom period.

Taylor moved to Wichita from Illinois in either late 1886 or early 1887 and remained until at least early 1894. During this time, he sold insurance for T. Hall and Company (1887), Taylor, Beech and Company (1888), and was employed by the Dold Packaging Company (1892) as a traveling salesman. During 1895, concurrent with the severe real estate bust that followed the boom, Taylor, like many other Wichitans, lost property revert back to the county for delinquent taxes.

At the time the house was built (1887-1888), the architectural firm of Terry and Hayward was in its infancy but attracting a great following. Each architect ultimately formed separate partnerships at different

times with local architect A. Dumont. The obscure and misleading citation from the Wichita Preservation Office records indicates that the Terry and Hayward firm may have designed this brick residence. During the summer of 1887, the architectural firm was most frequently listed in the *Wichita Eagle* as the designer of many new residential plans for prominent Wichitans. Other extant buildings that may be attributed to the firm have yet to be documented. C.W. Terry, originally from New York state, was the architect of the nonextant Boston Store, the nonextant Johnston-Larimer and nonextant Wichita Eagle buildings. He also designed the Victoria, Wenzel, Kelly Sisters, Bays, and Barnes apartment buildings. Buildings documented as associated with E. Hayward include those he and Dumont designed before Hayward joined Terry. Dumont and Hayward crafted the plans for St. John's Episcopal Church (1887) and the Carey House (1887, WHL, NRHP). Question still remains as to who actually designed this unusual Victorian residence that blends Richardsonian Romanesque, Romanesque, Queen Anne, and Classical.

The Lee Taylor-Steinbuchel-Gouldner House is essentially an example of Queen Anne-Romanesque architecture. Its characteristics are a blend of Queen Anne asymmetrical shaping and free classic and spindlework subgrouping detailing. As in the case of approximately 5% of the Queen Anne houses built in the United States (most in the larger eastern cities), the Lee Taylor-Steinbuchel-Gouldner House was constructed primarily of masonry and has borrowed heavily from the Romanesque and Italianate style for stone treatment and the use of string courses. Although brick is the primary building material used on the facades, the gable peaks are finished with fishscale, rectangular, and circular shingles which remind the viewer of the variety of cladding found in the typical Queen Anne building. The use of ashlar limestone for the foundation and sandstone and limestone lintels, arches, sills, and string courses reflects a Richardsonian influence. The free classic Queen Anne subgroup, which comprises approximately 35% of the Queen Anne houses built in the United States, is reflected in the use of dentils and the Palladian window effect (the latter is at bay one of the east facade). The Queen Anne spindlework subgroup, which accounts for approximately 50% of all Queen Annes, was incorporated in the porch ornamentation (Virginia and Lee McAlester 1986: 263-268).

The prominent Wichitan Herman Joseph Steinbuchel acquired the property in 1907 and his family retained ownership until 1947. Land records show L.W. Clapp and Cora A. Kingman held title to the property at different times from 1895 until the title transferred in 1907 to Herman Steinbuchel. Neither Ms. Kingman nor Mr. Clapp occupied the house during their period of ownership. Clapp, another prominent Wichitan, acquired the property for delinquent taxes in 1895. He transferred title to Kingman in 1907; nine days later the title transferred to Steinbuchel. According to city directories, after Taylor moved from the house, William Brown, the superintendent, general manager, and vice-president of Cudahy Packing Company, resided at the property until Steinbuchel purchased the house.

In 1908, Herman Joseph Steinbuchel transferred the property title to his wife, Marie Stackman Steinbuchel, a prominent business woman who controlled an extensive, local, real estate empire. Herman J. Steinbuchel was a German emigrant whose father had built homes along the banks of the Rhine (Dorothy Elizabeth Wilson 1973: 14). By the early 1870s, Herman had immigrated to New York with a sister and brother (Wilson 1973: 15). There, Herman worked two jobs until his savings provided the necessary capital for his brother and him to acquire a 160 acre land claim in Kansas, at St. Marks, approximately twenty miles from Wichita (Wilson 1973: 18). However, the brothers discovered farming was not for them, and in 1876, Herman moved to Wichita after contracting with the German-American Life Insurance Company of San Francisco to become their agent in Kansas (Wilson 1973: 18). Herman Steinbuchel quickly became involved in local real estate speculation. In 1892, he married Marie Louise Hahn Stackman, the widow of

local real estate speculator Peter Frederick Stackman, a German-born tailor who had moved to Wichita from St. Louis in 1872 and established a 160 acre land claim in part of the area that ultimately became part of Riverside neighborhood in northwest Wichita (Wilson 1973: 27).

In 1885, Stackman's real estate holdings included two three-story brick buildings at 150 and 154 North Main, his tailoring shop at 204-206 North Main where he employed eight tailors, a livery at First and Water streets, a row of wooden buildings in the 400 block of Main, two houses in the 700 block and a small store in the 100 block of Lawrence Street (Wilson 1973: 27). When the real estate bust hit in 1889, Stackman, like L.W. Clapp, acquired additional properties in the city at bargain prices. At that time, Stackman purchased at least two platted additions in the northern part of the city (Wilson 1973: 71-72).

Peter Stackman met his bride-to-be Marie Louise Hahn when he visited the Alsace region of Europe. The couple married in Strasbourg in 1887. Marie was twenty-one years younger than her husband. Within four years, Marie had borne three children (Bertha, 1888; Matilda, 1889; and Frederick, 1890) witnessed the death of six-weeks-old Matilda, and buried her husband who had died in 1891 (Wilson 1973: 36). Marie assumed management of Mr. Stackman's affairs despite her second marriage, this time to Herman Steinbuchel (Wilson 1973: 36). At the time of their marriage, Herman was 48 years old and Marie was 26. Both marriage partners maintained their separate investments. In 1908, a year after Herman had purchased the house at 1905 Main Street (now Park Place), he transferred title of the property to his wife. The practice of wives of real estate speculators holding title to property is a common thread in the history of Wichita (see College Hill II Survey Report 1988). The Steinbuchels had three children: Elizabeth (1893), Herman Joseph (1895), and Maximillian Joseph (1901).

Marie Hahn Stackman Steinbuchel was an early model of a businesswoman in Wichita. Trained by her mother who owned and managed real estate in Strasbourg, Marie likewise trained her own daughters (Bertha and Elizabeth) in business affairs. As a child, Bertha and Elizabeth collected the rents from the various tenants of their real estate holdings. After the death of Herman Steinbuchel, the family established investment companies (the Stackman Building and Investment Corporation, the Steinbuchel Building and Investment Company, and the Marie Hahn Building and Investment Company) which was presided over by Marie and Bertha (Secretary of State, Corporation Records). According to Herman Steinbuchel's last will and testament, his estate was left to Marie and her children, including Fred and Bertha Stackman (Wilson 1973: 129). However, Fred's half-brother Herman was to act as trustee of Fred's share. The family created the Steinbuchel Building and Investment Company the year the senior Steinbuchel died. Both investment firms operated simultaneously, each having separate land holdings (Secretary of State, Corporation Records). Another firm, the Marie Hahn Building and Investment Company, was associated with real estate linked to builders Fred Stackman and Max and Herman J. Steinbuchel. Although no corporate records of the company were found in the state archives of corporate records, the fact that the firm is in Marie's maiden name and was associated with family properties leads one to assume that a direct relationship existed between the various corporations and family members.

During the 1920s, the family corporations expanded their real estate holdings. At the time, Fred, Max, and Herman were engaged in the oil speculation boom and in the real estate development associated with the times. Much of the construction activity associated with the family and its investment companies included several lots located in the Riverside and Midtown areas (Wilson 1973: passim). At age twenty-three, Max made his first major oil strike which brought him a return of \$250,000 (Wilson 1973: 132). At the peak of the oil boom in 1928, which followed the discovery of oil at the Wright Number One near Valley Center,

Max and Fred started constructing apartments to meet the need of the transient middle-income oil workers. Multi-family housing was in great demand because of the tremendous influx of workers and businessmen associated with petroleum production and because builders in Wichita had remained focused nearly exclusively upon single-family residences until this time. Fred opened his own lumber yard along the Midland Railroad tracks and built eleven English duplexes and seven cottages behind the old Stackman farm house in Riverside (Wilson 1973: 133, 137). These structures were erected in an effort to maintain quality "above average" housing on the Stackman farm acreage (Wilson 1973: 133). While the family looked upon the Tudor-style Stackman Court as "Fred's property," its management and care were left to his mother (Wilson 1973: 137, 138).

While Fred's building reputation was associated with quality, his brother Max's construction reputation was more often linked to shoddy building practices. From the early age of sixteen, when Max convinced his father to buy the youth a grocery store in El Dorado, Max displayed an interest in quick profits that required little effort (Wilson 1973: 124). He became involved in oil speculation after he gambled away the daily receipts of the grocery store in nightly crap games (Wilson 1973: 124). After the death of Herman Steinbuchel, Marie gave Max four lots in the Stites Brothers addition. These lots were in turn traded and sold for a large apple orchard near Leon, Kansas, on which he drilled for, and struck, oil. Along with oil, brothers Fred, Herman, and Max engaged in construction speculation. Max built Spanish Courts, a twenty-four unit, one-story apartment building at the corner of Roosevelt and Sleepy Hollow. His builder reputation suffered a setback in the family after family members saw tin cans showing through the cement foundation (Wilson 1973: 132-133).

About 1915 Bertha married physician Rene Guldner and quickly changed the spelling of Guldner to Gouldner to soften the Germanic pronunciation of the name. The wedding ceremony took place in the family residence at 1905 Park Place. Along with real estate interests, Bertha was interested in a variety of civic causes (Wilson 1973: 143). She founded, and served for twenty-three years as chairman of the Salvation Army Board and was instrumental in maintaining the Booth Memorial Home and Hospital. The Salvation Army's International headquarters in London awarded her a medal in honor of her work (the first female to receive such an honor). In 1926, she became the first female appointed to the Wichita University Board of Regents, a position she held for many years (twelve of which she served on the fine arts committee in a variety of executive positions). During her tenure on the board, she was instrumental in bringing Dr. William Jardine to the university as president (1934-1938). Her name appears in the publications Who's Who in American Women, National Blue Books, and National Women in America (Wilson 1973: 143).

Throughout the years the family owned the property at 1905 Park Place, various family members occupied the site. Through the early 1910s, most of the family members resided at the house. In 1916, Fred's wife Helen joined the family group at the address. In 1921, after Bertha's marriage, Marie deeded the property to her daughter who resided there until 1943 when Max moved to the house with his wife Patricia. Title to the property had transferred from Bertha back to Marie in 1942. In 1944 Marie transferred ownership to Patricia. Max and his wife remained in residence through at least 1946. In May 1947, the property transferred from the family to Roscoe A. Fox, an engineer with Koch Engineering Company (for a listing of other owners see attached documentation).

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